



Liveforpeace.org Callers Guide for Church Office Administrators

Congratulations!! You are about to embark on what we hope will be the beginning of an amazing journey to help grow the church!

Your role is very important. You will likely be the first point of local contact for anyone who has seen the advertising in your area.

Like you, the staff at Mennonite Church Canada is experiencing a campaign like this for the first time. There is much we don't know, but we can try and anticipate what and whom we may encounter. You can prepare yourself by taking seriously the following guidelines as you respond to callers.

- Prepare yourself and your pastoral spirit in prayer. Pray for each other, your pastor(s) and lay leaders. Ask God for patience and gentleness to respond well amid other duties, responsibilities, and deadline.
- Help callers hear the warmth, the welcome, and the smile in your voice. If you are in the office part time, test your voice mail greeting to see if it is warm and welcoming.
- Practice active listening. Rather than thinking about your response while callers are speaking, devote your whole mind and heart to their words, then pause to think about your response before speaking.
- Despite your other pressing work assignments, help the caller feel as though there is nothing you would rather be doing just now than to be talking with them.
- Be confident but kind, prepare your attitude in humility, be open to callers and their needs, and be ready to help. In most cases it will mean re-directing the caller to whom/whatever will be most helpful to them. For example:
 - If someone wants specific, personal attention, refer the caller to your Pastor (if he/she is available), or other church caregiver, (ex. deacon) or record their name and contact information with a promise that someone will respond to them.
 - If they simply want to know more about your congregation, ask them what kind of information would be most helpful to them. For example:
 - Invite them to peruse in detail your church web site, and if they haven't already, www.liveforpeace.org.
 - Invite them to a worship service, a special event, or work with your membership to create an information evening in advance to which they can be invited. Such meetings may be best held off site if newcomers feel uncomfortable meeting in a church for the first time. It will be important that any special meetings to accommodate enquiries be held soon before minds are changed, dates are forgotten.
 - Mail them a brochure about Mennonites available from www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/832)
 - Invite them to view videos on Mennonite Church Canada's YouTube channel at www.youtube.ca/mennonitechurchca.



- Keen callers may be interested in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective at <http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/about/cof/>
 - Callers seeking more resources can be directed to www.mennonitechurch.ca/resourcecentre. Personal assistance from the Resource Centre can be provided by Arlyn Friesen Epp at 1-866-888-6785.
 - Transfer difficult or abusive callers to your pastor. If your pastor is not available, handle the caller with diplomacy as best you can and re-affirm that you have heard their concern and offer to take their name and number so that someone else can respond to them. Your church may already have guidelines in place for dealing with difficult or threatening callers.
 - Threatening phone calls need not be tolerated. Simply respond by calmly asking for the caller's identity or affiliation. If the caller makes an improper response or does not respond immediately, hang up. Don't engage them, and don't give them the satisfaction of fear. Record the incident for future reference.
- Help callers with what they want or need to know, and direct them appropriately. We anticipate that callers will fall into three broad categories:
 - Warm, agreeable, curious, willing to learn more (can include calls from the media)
 - Indifferent (these folks are not likely to call anyway)
 - Cold, not open, and perhaps even abusive
 - Schedule a short meeting among all church admin staff once a week or as possible, and share your experiences with one another. It will be very important to learn from one another about what you are experiencing, and to encourage one another.
 - Journal or take notes about the experience for yourself and to share with your pastors(s) and/or lay leaders.
 - Direct all media calls to your designated media spokesperson. (In MCA, Doug Klassen, Pastors at Foothills Mennonite Church, 403-289-7172).
 - Ensure that your church's website is extra-current. Visitors to your site will want to see up to date information about your worship times, other meeting opportunities, and special events.
 - If there are needs you, your pastor, media spokesperson, or other members of your congregation cannot respond to, contact Dan Dyck via the contact information on this letterhead or via email at ddyck@mennonitechurch.ca. He will help you directly or refer you to someone who can.
 - **Very important:** Record the following information so that we can measure what kind of impact the campaign is having (including media calls). It is important to know how many calls were received, the character of the calls, and whether the caller would like some sort of follow up. Please keep this information and forward it to Dan Dyck once calls have stopped coming in.

Date of call	Warm	Cold	Indifferent	Name and contact info for follow-up



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